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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 377, OCTOBER 14, 1 PM

SENT DEPARTMENT 377, BONN 336, REPEATED INFORMATION LONDON  
104, PARIS 94, MOSCOW 118.

REFERENCE: OURTEL 331 TO BONN, 371 TO DEPARTMENT.

LAST WEEK'S GDR FLAG PROVOCATION IN BERLIN HAS PRODUCED  
EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS THAT REQUIRE CAREFUL WEIGHING. NO  
ONE HERE IS COMPLACENT ABOUT EPISODE. MISTAKES WERE MADE;  
SUCCESS ACHIEVED; AND WE WERE LUCKY PROTEST WORKED.

FURTHER ANALYSIS OF LAST WEEK'S EVENTS AND SEVERAL CONCLUSIONS  
WE DRAW THEREFROM ARE SET FORTH BELOW. LATER TELEGRAM OUTLINES  
USCOB AND USBER'S VIEWS ON HOW WE PLAN PROCEED MEET FUTURE  
SITUATIONS OF THIS KIND.

WEST BERLIN LEADERS IN RETROSPECT DIVIDED ON WISDOM OF FORCEFUL  
ACTION TO REMOVE FLAGS IN FACE DANGER OF SERIOUS CLASHES.  
MAJORITY PUBLIC AND SOME NEWSPAPERS, HOWEVER, FAVORED HAULING  
DOWN FLAGS. INITIAL POLICE ACTION WIDELY CRITICIZED IN  
PRESS AND BY PUBLIC FOR POOR PLANNING, FAILURE FOLLOW  
THROUGH, AND LACK COORDINATION WITH ALLIES. SUBSEQUENT  
ALLIED PROTEST TO SOVS HAILED AND CREDITED WITH LOWERING  
OF FLAGS OCTOBER 8. THERE LITTLE OVERT INDICATION OF PUBLIC  
UNREST (ONLY SIX FLAGS REMOVED BY IRATE PUBLIC), BUT TRADE  
UNIONS RECEIVED NUMEROUS EXPRESSIONS OF DISCONTENT THAT  
FLAGS NOT REMOVED; BRANDT'S APPEAL FOR MAINTENANCE LAW AND  
ORDER MAY HAVE PUT DAMPER ON FLAG REMOVING ACTIONS PLANNED  
BY WORKERS.

MEMBERS BERLIN SENAT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION ADMIT; 1) SENAT  
DECISION ON REMOVAL OF FLAGS TAKEN ALMOST HAPHAZARDLY, AND WITHOUT  
THOROUGH STUDY ALL AVAILABLE FACTS; 2) POLICE ACTION NOT

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WELL STAGED; 3) ONCE DECIDED UPON, ACTION SHOULD HAVE BEEN CARRIED THROUGH FORCEFULLY; 4) SENAT DECISION TAKEN WITHOUT ADEQUATE CONSULTATION ALLIED AUTHORITIES.

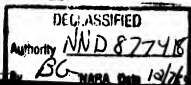
BERLIN LEADERS, WHO RECOGNIZE NEED FOR FUTURE COORDINATION OF POLICIES AND PLANS, POINT TO FOLLOWING POSITIVE ASPECTS OF POLICE ACTION OCTOBER 6: 1) SENAT HAS GIVEN CLEAR INDICATION WHERE IT STANDS ON FLAG ISSUE; 2) DEMONSTRATION BY COMMUNISTS THAT THEY HAVE CAPACITY CREATE SERIOUS TROUBLE IN WEST BERLIN HAS EMPHASIZED NECESSITY MAINTAIN WESTERN FORCES HERE; 3) WESTERN COMMANDANTS HAVE CLARIFIED RESPONSIBILITY OVER S-BAHN INSTALLATIONS IN WEST BERLIN.

ON OTHER HAND IT SHOULD BE NOTED COMMIE PROPAGANDA, DESPITE FACT FLAGS CAME DOWN IN WEST BERLIN THREE DAYS BEFORE THEY DID IN EAST BERLIN, HAS WITH CERTAIN EFFECTIVENESS STRESSED THEME ALLIED POWERS AND WEST BERLIN GOVERNMENT EITHER UNWILLING OR UNABLE TAKE UNIFIED, DECISIVE, AND RAPID ACTION.

IN FURTHER APPRAISING SITUATION WE NOTE THAT PREVIOUSLY ON MAJOR GDR HOLIDAYS (MAY 1, MAY 8, OCT 7, NOV 7) FLAGS IDENTICAL WITH FEDREP FLAG FLOWN S-BAHN INSTALLATIONS WEST BERLIN. INTRODUCTION NEW GDR FLAG LAST WEEK WAS DESIGNED TO EMPHASIZE SOVEREIGN STATUS CLAIMED FOR GDR. APPEARANCE NEW FLAG IN WEST BERLIN WAS ACCOMPANIED BY PRIOR ASSEMBLY EAST GERMAN STRONG-ARM SQUADS PREPARED EXPLOIT ANY ENSUING INCIDENT TO SHOW WEST BERLIN CONSTITUTES SERIOUS PROBLEM WHICH MUST BE SOLVED QUICKLY. ACTION UNDERLINED CONTENTION THAT "BERLIN-IS CAPITAL OF GDR AND WEST BERLIN LIES ON GDR TERRITORY.

ADOPTION NEW FLAG AND ITS DISPLAY MUST HAVE BEEN PURPOSEFUL STEPS IN IMPLEMENTATION SOVIET POLICY FOR GERMANY. WHETHER SOVIETS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN TACTICAL DECISION DISPLAY FLAG WEST BERLIN IS NOT CLEAR; THIS ASPECT OF INCIDENT MIGHT HAVE DEVELOPED MORE FROM GDR HANDLING OF MATTER THAN FROM JOINT GDR-USSR POLICY DECISION. IN ANY CASE, ONCE PROJECT WAS

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LAUNCHED THERE WAS NO REASON FOR SOVS TO STOP IT SO LONG AS GDR WAS SUCCESSFULLY GETTING AWAY WITH IT. THAT WESTERN COMMANDANTS' OCT 7 PROTEST BROUGHT RESULTS WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS SHOWS THAT SOVS PRESENTLY UNWILLING TO CONNIVE IN PROVOCATION AGAINST WEST BERLIN PAST A CERTAIN POINT.

IN ORDER TO MAKE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR TO SOVIETS AND GDR THAT NO NONSENSE WILL BE COUNTENANCED IN FUTURE, WE PRESSED FOR DELACOMBE'S FOLLOW-UP DEMARCHE WHICH HE MADE OCTOBER 12. IT IS VIEW OF USCOB AND USBER THAT THIS COMMITS COMMANDANTS AUTHORIZE PROMPT POLICE ACTION IF GDR FLAGS REHOISTED IN WEST BERLIN. THIS WILL BE BASIC IN OUR PLANNING.

THIS TELEGRAM SENT USAREUR AND CINCEUR THROUGH MILITARY CHANNELS.

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